

5416

Testimony for Public Hearing for Children
Human Services Committee
Youth and Adults for Mental Health Issues
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Good morning Human Services Committee Members. My name is Ginny Gerena, I am an Advocacy Unlimited graduate. I would like to petition for HB 5416. An act concerning the Transition of Care and Treatment of Children and Youth from DCF to DMHAS. It is basically a bill to develop and implement assurance of interagency agreements that youth with mental illnesses will transition effectively from DCF to DMHAS. Without specific timelines for the process and require adulthood, and require transition meetings to deliver appropriate services needed for the youth clients to develop positive lifeskills into transition to becoming adults to be able to get services into the adult mental health system. It would also require the commissioners to jointly assess and plan for the anticipated service needs and also to report the Human Services and Appropriations Committees and the Select Committee on Children describing the transition process.

I am presently an Advocate Member for System of Care Hartford, West Hartford Collaborative, CBHAC, (Children's Behavioral Health Advisory Committee) and FAVOR, a Family Advocacy Agency's Citizen Review Panel among several other non-profit agencies. I have been doing this work for over 7 years. I am also advocating for more Cultural and Sensitivity Awareness Training Sessions for Parents and Providers, for these trainings would eliminate more turmoil on youth and families, of having troubled youth go through not furthering their education and thus leading to suspensions in schools, and more youth going through the Juvenile Justice system, and they would end up in the DOC, Department of Corrections. Which ultimately would result in more cost to the Connecticut State Budget system that is already lacking funds. Thank you for your time and attention and I would appreciate your careful consideration to this matter.

Virginia Gerena